NATURAL NEWS

The Field Museum
Exploring
The Earth And Its
People

WEEKLY STAFF NEWSLETTER
December 5, 1997

Ask the President!

ANNUAL STAFF TALK

Monday, December 15, 1997
9:00 - 10:00 a.m.
Montgomery Ward Hall

Put those rumors to rest -- get the scoop straight from the source! John McCarter will review the Museum's activities and discuss our goals for the future. There will be time for questions -- and answers.

CONGRATULATIONS!

The Graphics Division of the Exhibits Department is pleased to announce the honor of publication in the prestigious PRINT Annual 97. The PRINT Annual is a showcase for all the best design work in the country. Awarded placement were the **Spiders** exhibit building banners with the spider on the roof. Congratulations to **Jean Cattell**, art direction, **David Quednau,** design and **John Weinstein** for the beautiful photograph of the building and its banners.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

CENTER FOR CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND CHANGE

The three day Epic of Evolution Conference jointly sponsored by the Center for Cultural Understanding and Change (CCUC) and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) was a resounding success, with close to 500 people attending all three days of the Conference. CCUC and AAAS will produce several products from the conference, including a published volume of the conference papers; a video tape series; and a public television special (to be aired on WYCC, channel 20). CCUC would like to thank all Field Museum staff who facilitated this event: volunteers who worked at the registration tables; store for selling the books; Audio/Visual staff for technical support; curatorial staff who acted as moderators.

We offer a special thanks to **Mary Futrell**, the program assistant who ensured the smooth operation of the event from start to finish! We wish Mary the best of luck as she continues her doctoral studies at UIC under the supervision of **Jonathan Haas**.

ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT

MacArthur Curator **Jonathan Haas**, Assistant Curator **Chap Kusimba**, Curator **John Terrell** and Associate Curator **Alaka Wali** (all Anthropology) attended the 96th annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association, held November 19-23 in Washington D.C. Wali and Haas participated in a Council for Museum Anthropology invited session on "Museums for the 21st Century: Experimenting with Anthropology in the Public Sphere." Haas discussed changing aspects of museum anthropology practice while Wali discussed the "Living Together" exhibit. The session was lively and well attended. Kusimba presented a paper entitled "Ethnic Diversity and Formation of Swahili Polities in East Africa" in a session on Perspectives on African Cultural and Biological Diversity.

ZOOLOGY NEWS

MacArthur Curator **Bruce Patterson** (Zoology, Mammals) has been appointed to the editorial boards of two new serial publications. The first, *Publicaciones Especiales, Mastozoología Neotropical*, publishes monographs on Neotropical mammals and is based in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Articles are published in English, Spanish or Portuguese and the editorial board contains mammalogists exclusively. The second, *Diversity and Distributions*, is of potentially much broader interest to Field Museum staff. It seeks to publish reviews and original articles on a wide variety of biodiversity topics, covering all types of organisms, ecosystems and scales of ecological understanding, from molecular to community and landscape and global perspectives. Others on the twenty-six-member board include P. Harvey, G. Hewitt, R. M. May, G. Prance, O. Solbrig, and E. O. Wilson. Information for potential contributors may be found at http://www.blackwell-science.com/products/journals/ifa/biodia.htm.

HEANEY MAKES QUICK TRIP TO TAIWAN

Associate Curator **Larry Heaney** (Zoology, Mammals), was in Taiwan for ten days in late November for a whirl-wind series of seminars and travel. The first and primary order of business was delivering an invited presentation on "Philippine Biodiversity and Conservation" at a meeting entitled "The Symposium on the Phylogeny, Biogeography, and Conservation of Fauna and Flora of East Asian Region, 1997," sponsored by the Taiwan National Research Council and held at the National Taiwan University November 14-15. Larry then traveled to the Fu-Shan Nature Reserve, where there is extensive old-growth broadleaf tropical rainforest and abundant populations of such mammals as giant flying squirrels, barking deer, macaques, and ferret-badgers. After giving additional seminars at Tunghai University and the National Taiwan University, Larry visited the Taiwan Endangered Species Conservation and Research Center and

Electronic Mail Simplified

Electronic mail is easy and fast -- provided you know one thing: the email address to put on your message. Others want to know what your email address is, too. We have come up with an easy way to determine the recommended address for any staff member at the museum. Before we go into detail be assured, *all old addresses still work and will not stop working.* Keep your current login name, whatever it is, but to make this work for everyone, let's start using the new rules.

The new addressing system uses the first letter of the first name combined with the last name of the person to be addressed. For example, John McCarter's email address is "jmccarter." Spellings of names are taken directly from the master phone list which everyone has. Yes, include hyphens, without any spaces: email addressed to "wgrewe-mullins" goes to Will Grewe-Mullins.

To make things even simpler for your colleagues outside of the museum, our institutional address is getting shorter. For access from outside of our internal email system, add "@fmnh.org" to any address. McCarter's full email address would be, "jmccarter@fmnh.org". You are probably using the long form "@fmppr.fmnh.org" today. The use of "fmppr" is redundant and should be phased out over the next few years as stationery and cards are reprinted, etc.

The system is already in place, so go ahead and begin using it. If you notice any problems or someone we left out, please contact **Jim Koeppl** (x590, jkoeppl@fmnh.org) or **Tim Krauskopf** (x735, tkrauskopf@fmnh.org).

Technical note: If you feel confident about changing your return address yourself, here is how. In Eudora, find the Special menu, choose the Settings command, in the box select the Sending Mail option, and change the return address box to your new address. Test with a friend to make sure people can reply to you.

Ask Tim!

Brown Bag Lunch on Friday, December 12 at 12 noon in Lecture Hall II

Tim Krauskopf, Head of Information Services, will hold an informal information session.

For those who often ask why? For example, why is the C drive called the C drive?

For those self-taught users who are often saying, "how do you do this?" for everything from how to email attachments to how to find the version number of your Word program.

This program is for you!

To make the session more productive, help Tim to prepare by calling or emailing him in advance with your questions (x735, tkrauskopf@fmnh.org).

the National Museum of Natural Science, both in Taichung City. Finally, Larry visited Taroko National Park, a large area of forest that reaches from sea level to 4,000 meters elevation. At all of these sites, research facilities were excellent, and an enthusiastic group of faculty and students are pursuing studies of issues related to systematics, ecology, and conservation. Opportunities for collaborative research seem excellent; for details, contact Larry.

FIALKOWSKI INVITED PRESENTER AT JAPANESE FORUM

Environmental Educator-in-Residence **Carol Fialkowski** (Environmental and Conservation Programs, ECP) was an invited presenter at the Forum on Environmental Education for Youth held in Kyoto, Japan from November 22-24. Its purpose was to bring attention to the need for environmental education programs in Japan's educational system. The Forum was scheduled to precede the International Global Warming Conference currently being held in Kyoto from December 1-10.

Sponsored by the Kyoto Research Park, the Society for Youth and Science and the Kyoto Prefecture, the Forum consisted of a workshop for students aged ten to fifteen and a presentation and discussion for educators, government officials, museum staff and environmental leaders. For the students, Carol conducted a workshop featuring the use of Field Museum's Harris kits with owl pellet dissection and an owl food web game as highlights. Hands-on learning is very new in Japan; even parent participants were fascinated!

For the adult seminar, Carol delivered a presentation on The Field Museum, our environmental and conservation programs and our philosophy of environmental education. She also participated in a discussion and "advice session" with educators answering questions on successful environmental education techniques, and served on a panel with Japanese environmental educators focusing on future needs, approaches and global conservation networks. All sessions had simultaneous translations.

Environmental education is in its infancy in Japan. The Ministry of Education is looking to museums for assistance in providing leadership and programs to schools and the public. Both the Lake Biwa Museum (on the shores of Japan's largest lake) and the Ibaraki Nature Museum (north of Tokyo) have recently been opened and are directed toward developing and providing environmental education. To date, museums in Japan have not been destinations for school groups nor have they used audience participation in program development. Japanese speakers emphasized the need for "hands-on learning" to provide and develop problem-solving skills. They are very interested in U.S. science reform efforts. The Ibaraki Museum will be visiting The Field Museum in December to learn more about our programs.

THE FIELD MUSEUM IN ECUADOR'S AMAZONIA

From November 8-15, The Field Museum led a tour to Ecuador, focusing on the extraordinary biological diversity of western Ecuador's Oriente region. After a day in Quito spent visiting

cathedrals and walking on the Equator (0'0'0'), the group traveled via plane, boat, truck and canoe (with a freshwater dolphin escort) to reach the Tiputini Biological Station deep in the tropical rainforest. Conservation Ecologist **Doug Stotz** (Environmental and Conservation Programs, ECP) overwhelmed guests with his uncanny ability to identify birds -- over 270 different species in three days! That's more than occur in Illinois, even during the height of migration. Not only did the group see the famous Amazon inhabitants -- toucans, macaws and parrots -- but Doug introduced many of the more elusive, jewel-like creatures, including dazzling cotingas, antbirds, tanagers, jacamars and dancing manakins.

While Doug mesmerized guests with his birds, Conservation Ecologist **Robin Foster** (ECP) captivated the group with the wonderful treasures hidden within the vast expanse of green. Robin also fascinated the guests with amazing plant stories, including that of the Duroia -- a tree protected by a battalion of ants, which the tree compensates with sweet nectar. When any other plant tries to grow near the Duroia, the ants tear it down in order to protect their host's small patch of invaluable sunlight. Robin's most impressive show was a patch of florescent yellow slimemold. The slimemold entertained the group during the four-day stay by dramatically climbing a log, attacking and devouring a colony of white sporing mushrooms, crawling down to the rainforest's leaf-covered floor and finally sporing itself.

Director **Debby Moskovits** (ECP) and Sponsored Programs Coordinator **Sophie Twichell** (Academic Affairs) accompanied the trip to guarantee that the group hiked an extraordinary number of miles every day, sweated profusely, didn't touch poisonous frogs, avoided quicksand and were not eaten by caimans or jaguars! And Illustrator **Peggy Macnamara** recorded the adventure via camera and sketches.

NSF APPLICANTS

Many of the National Science Foundation (NSF) programs are now requiring grant proposals to be submitted electronically via FastLane. If you are planning to submit a proposal to NSF in the near future, you should double-check what submission format your program officer prefers -- paper or electronic. If you intend to submit via FastLane, please note that you will need to purchase the Adobe Acrobat software package (including "PDF Writer"). If you have any questions, call **Sophie Twichell** (x877).

NOON BALLOON

The Noon Balloon presentation for Tuesday, November 25, 1997 was delivered by **Patrick Leacock,** Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Department of Botany, Field Museum. Pat discussed the results of four years of research on the diversity of ectomycorrhizal fungi in mature and old growth stands of two Minnesota forest types. He found nearly 250 fungal species in red pine, but only 125 species in the hardwood-conifer forests. In addition, fungi were present in 97% of all sample plots in the red pine, but in only about 16% of the sample plots in the hardwood-conifer forests. Within the red pine samples, fungal diversity was greater in mature

stands, about 120 years old, than in the old growth stands, about 230 years old. However, fungal density was greater in old growth stands than in mature stands. Pat found forty-four species of fungi in mature hardwood-conifer stands, and sixty-three species in old growth hardwood-conifer stands. In characterizing the ectomycorrhizal fungal communities of these two forest types, Pat has developed important base line data for future comparisons. Additional research is needed to attempt to identify physical and ecological factors responsible for the strong differences in fungal species diversity between the red pine and hardwood-conifer forests in Minnesota.

The Noon Balloon presentation for Tuesday, December 2, 1997 was delivered by Zolalaina Randriarimalala, participant in the Autumn 1997 Session of the Conservation Training Consortium. Zolalaina discussed natural resource management programs in Madagascar. These programs are supported by domestic government agencies as well as several international agencies such as USAID, the World Bank and Conservation International. Efforts are being directed toward conservation, habitat protection, development of multiple forest use in a sustainable fashion, and watershed management. Although numerous groups of organisms are poorly sampled in Madagascar, the documented level of Malagasy endemicity is very high. For example, 80% of its nearly 12,000 species of vascular plants occur only in Madagascar. Zolalaina also discussed the Zahamena National Park near the eastern coast of north central northeastern Madagascar. The reserve encompasses 67,000 sq ha of tropical forest. More than 100 species of orchids, 110 species of birds and fourteen species of lemurs are endemic to the reserve. Local programs are focused to discourage deforestation due to slash and burn, and encourage reforestation, the development of cottage industries, and environmental education through an interpretative center to explain the importance of maintaining biodiversity and supporting conservation efforts.

SKUNKS UNDER STUDY

University of Chicago student Johnny Hsu (Geology) has been awarded $500 from the Richter Research Support for "Phylogeny of the Mustelidae Family". With MacArthur Curator **John Flynn** (Geology) as his sponsor, Johnny plans to test the hypothesis that skunks, otters, weasels, badgers and the wolverine comprise a monophyletic unit (a group of taxa that contains an ancestor and all of its descendants). According to recent molecular evidence skunks may not "mustelids". Rather, they may reside in their own family with the European stink badger. In addition to collecting nucleotide sequence data from two genes and twenty carnivoran taxa, Johnny also plans to include dental and skeletal characters to test his hypothesis.

FABULOUS SALE -- The Museum Store, December 9-11 -- *Go early, get the best!*

The *Natural News* is edited by **Carolyn Klyce** in the President's Office. The deadline for all submissions -- in WordPerfect on floppy disk or via email to klyce@fmppr.fmnh.org -- is Tuesday at noon.

SECURITY TIP

Although it is admittedly convenient to keep your badge and keys on the same ring or chain there are security hazards associated with this practice. When keys are lost with an ID badge attached, the unauthorized person who may gain possession of these items would then have instant information on where the keys can be used, including which department. This not only puts our valuables and artifacts at risk but also our employees. Please take the time to assess how you carry your badge and keys. And be sure to report loss of keys or badge to security immediately.

STRESS REDUCERS

The Holidays can be a particularly stressful time. Here are some stress reducing ideas from Greenspring, our Employee Assistance Program:

- ★ Get plenty of rest, eat regular, healthy meals and exercise.
- ★ Do something you loved as a child -- build a snowman, go sledding.
- ★ Help someone else.
- ★ Write down three things you did well today.
- ★ Share your stress. Call Greenspring at 1-800-851-7498 for *confidential* assistance.

REMINDER

The Annual Holiday Fest is only a few days away (December 17)! Please remember to RSVP by Friday, December 5th. You may RSVP to **Joanna** (x356) in Human Resources.

HOLIDAY FEST GUEST PARKING

Pay as you come parking will be available in the east lot to guests for the Holiday Fest. Please notify your guest(s) of these parking arrangements.

STEEL DRUMS GIVE AWAY

Thirteen 55-gallon steel drums with lids are available to anyone who needs them. Ideal for shipping large items. Please call **Kevin Swagel,** Fishes (x428).

FREE! to a Good Home

Huge old wooden table *frame* (legs + frame, no top) is looking for a home. It's dimensions are 92" long X 57" wide X 31" high. Interested? Please contact **Kevin Swagel** (x428) or **Mary Anne Rogers** (x272) in Fishes.